



H.R. 1312 – ARTS REQUIRE TIMELY SERVICE (ARTS) ACT

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 1312 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Howard Berman (D-CA) on March 5, 2007. The bill was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary, and was reported as amended on March 6, 2008.

H.R. 1312 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on March 11, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 1312 amends the Immigration and Nationality Act by requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide an expedited adjudication of visas immigrants with extraordinary artistic or athletic ability and their families and dependants.

The bill states that if the Secretary does not adjudicate such employer petitions within the required timeframe of 30 days, and the petitioning employer is a qualified nonprofit organization or is petitioning on behalf of a qualified nonprofit organization, then the employer must be provided with premium processing services without a processing fee.

BACKGROUND

The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) was created in 1952. Before the INA, a variety of statutes governed immigration law but were not organized in one location. The Act has been amended many times over the years, but is still the basic body of immigration law.

According to the Congressional Research Service, four major principles make up current U.S. policy on permanent immigration: the reunification of families, the admission of immigrants with needed skills, the protection of refugees, and the diversity of admissions by country of origin. These principles are embodied in the INA. Legal permanent residents (LPRs) refer to foreign nationals who live permanently in the United States. During FY2006, a total of 1,266,264 aliens became LPRs in the United States. Of this total, 63.4% entered the country as accompanying the qualifying alien.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that implementing H.R. 1312 would have no significant cost to the federal government.

STAFF CONTACT

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